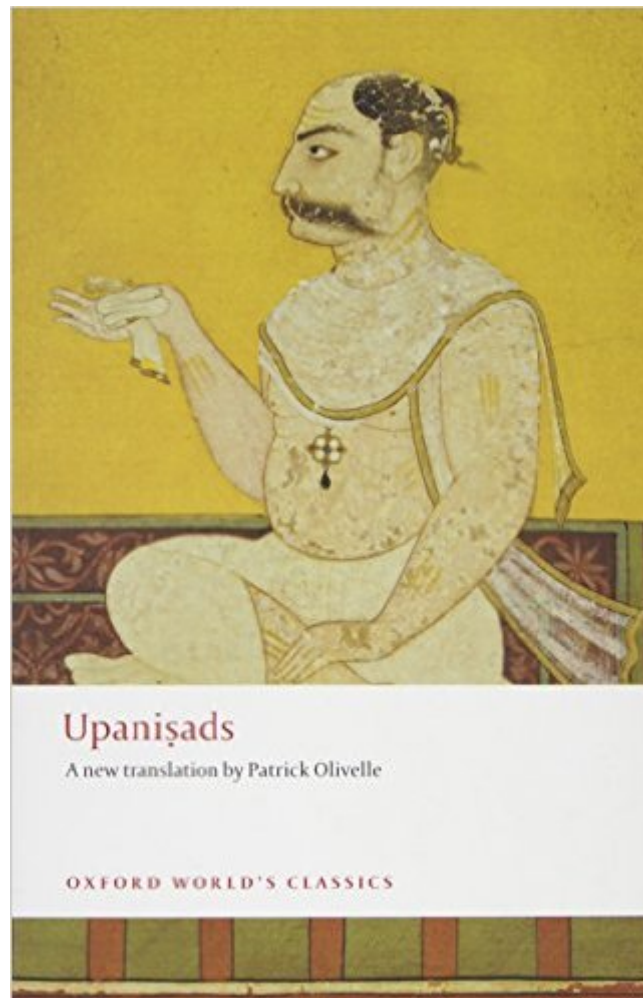


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Upanisads (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

In the first major English translation of the ancient Upanisads for over half a century, Olivelle's work incorporates the most recent historical and philological scholarship on these central scriptures of Hinduism. Composed at a time of great social, economic, and religious change, the Upanisads document the transition from the archaic ritualism of the Veda into new religious ideas and institutions. The introduction and detailed notes make this edition ideal for the non-specialist as well as for students of Indian religions. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After some Sanskrit studies years ago, I decided I'd like to read the principal Upanishads in an accurate (so not the laughably loose Mascaro version) but readable (so not the painfully literal and commentary-heavy tome of Radhakrishnan) English version. It soon became apparent that the choice was between Olivelle (the volume reviewed here) and Valerie Roebuck's Penguin Classics edition of 2000/2003. The academic book reviews were quite ambivalent, so I got the two rivals out from the library and made my own comparison. I was surprised to find the Oxford superior in every way. Most importantly, Olivelle's translation (while plenty literal) is simply in much more natural

English. Roebuck is fond of unnatural word order. Her version includes many footnotes on each page, without which her text would sometimes make no sense; Olivelle manages to translate just as literally, but so that you don't NEED to consult his equally voluminous notes in the back. Looking at the Sanskrit text in cases of notable differences, I found that I was almost always more satisfied with Olivelle's version as scrupulously & clearly reflecting the original, too. (In any case, there's no question that Olivelle is the more authoritative scholar; Roebuck needs to cite several of his books in her bibliography and apologize for the "temerity" of offering a new version, but there is no important scholarly work of Roebuck's that Olivelle can cite in his extensive bibliography.) Publishing is a business. Roebuck freely admits that she relied heavily on Olivelle's version in making her own. The surprise is that she did not manage to stand on his shoulders and make something better in any way.

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